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ABSTRACT

In this interdisciplinary curriculum unit, students examine and debate the relationship between China and Tibet. Students are expected to produce a mock television report covering topics related to the Tibet question, such as historical issues, the policies of the U.S., Chinese, and Tibetan governments, and human rights concerns. Students are provided with background information, detailed instructions, on-line resources, and reflection questions. The teacher's notes describe the unit's purpose, its correlation to history/social science and language arts standards, and how to conduct the lesson, including management and assessment tips. (RJC)

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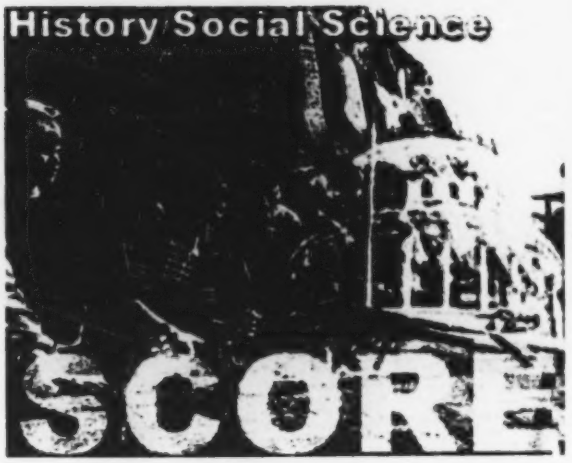

Schools of California Online Resources for Education (SCORE): Connecting California's Classrooms to the World

The Tibet Question

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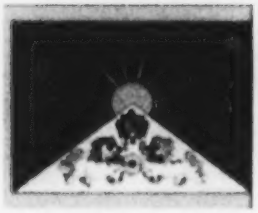
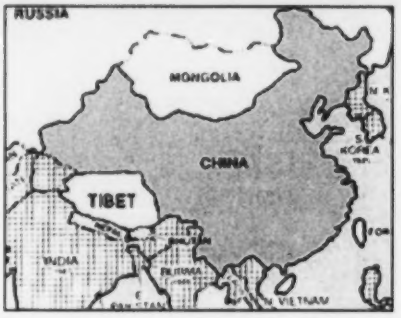


The Tibet Question



Introduction

To the Chinese, the international furor over Tibet parallels Western intrigues in Chinese affairs dating back to the 19th Century Opium Wars, the Boxer Rebellion, U.S. support of the Nationalist Chinese during the Chinese Civil War, the Great Cultural Revolution and Tiananmen Square. On the other hand, Westerners, spurred by efforts of the Tibetan exile community and Hollywood feature films like "Seven Years in Tibet" and "Kundun", tend to quickly assume that the Chinese are at fault. The true story about Tibet lies somewhere in between.

Problem:

An international news agency is doing a special on "The Tibet Question". They will be interviewing members of the Tibetan groups, the Chinese and US government officials, representatives of human rights organizations and Chinese scholars. You will be assigned to one of these groups in preparation for this news special.

Task:

You will be assigned to one of these groups to present "your" group's point of view. You will need to take into account the historical background of the issue as well as anticipating the positions held by other groups. Your presentation will be composed of two parts. First, your

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verbal presentation will be given to the news agency for broadcast. Secondly, your group will include a report that can be in the format of a website, a brochure, a magazine article or an electronic presentation like PowerPoint. The verbal group presentation will be 5-7 minutes long and be "filmed" as part of the "Tibetan Question: Special Report".

Process:

1. Select a group: (Your teacher may do the selecting and the groups can vary in size. You may want to read on before choosing.)

    a. News Network Team (Anchors, Producer, Technical)

    b. Tibetan Government in Exile

    c. Chinese Government

    d. International "Free Tibet" Student Groups

    e. Human Rights Groups

    f. United States Government

    g. Chinese/Tibetan Historical Specialists (optional)

    h. Environmental Specialists (optional)

2. Do background research on the issues: (Your teacher may choose to provide readings or a presentation on these topics or they may be researched on the Internet.)

    a. 19th Century Western Imperialism in China

    b. The Boxer Rebellion

    c. The Chinese Civil War and the Chinese "occupation" or "reassertion of control" over Tibet

in 1951

d. The Great Cultural Revolution

e. Tiananmen Square

3. Do research on the position of your group with respect to these issues:

a. Is Tibet really an independent country or is it part of China?

b. Are Tibetan human rights being violated or are they being held to the same standard as ethnic Chinese?

c. Are Westerners interfering in Chinese affairs unfairly?

i. Are Westerners continuing their historical interference in Chinese matters?

ii. Does the international community have the right to challenge the Chinese on their activities in Tibet?

d. What should be the solution for Tibet?

4. Do the presentation(s):

a. The Written Report part can be done as a web page or website or using print media or electronically using a presentation program such as PowerPoint. You may choose to use this part of the presentation while you do your Verbal Presentation.

b. The Verbal Presentation will be 5-7 minutes long. You will be expected to play the role of the group that you were assigned.

Resources

Tibetan Exile Groups:

The Tibetan Government in Exile
http://www.tibet.com/
The Tibet Office in New York
http://www.magicoftibet.com/home.html

Tibetan Human Rights Groups:

The Tibet Online Support Group
http://www.tibet.org/
The Students for Tibet
http://www.tibet.org/SFT
The Free Tibet Campaign
http://www.freetibet.org/
The International Campaign for Tibet
http://www.savetibet.org/
Tibet Information Network
http://www.tibetinfo.net/

Chinese Government Sites:

The Chinese Embassy in Washington,DC
http://www.china-embassy.org/
China Today - The Chinese News Agency
http://www.chinatoday.com/
China Research Network (use search engine on home page)
http://www.net.edu.cn/
China's Tibet contains Chinese view of Tibetan history and culture
http://www.tibet-china.org/indexE.html

Chinese Human Right Groups:

Human Rights in China
http://www.hrichina.org
Amnesty International USA

http://www.amnestyusa.org/asa/china/
Human Rights Internet
http://www.hri.ca

Environmental Groups:

Tibet Environmental Watch
http://www.tew.org/

Independent News Organizations:

China News Agency
http://www.insidechina.com/
CNN
http://www.cnn.com

United States Government Sites:

The Whitehouse Search Page
http://www.whitehouse.gov/WH/html/library.html
The US State Department
http://www.state.gov
United States Information Agency on China
http://www.usia.gov../regional/EA/uschina/uschina.htm

Learning Advice

Step 1) Understand Roles:

a. News Network Team (Anchors, Producer, Technical)

You will need to "storyboard" the total presentation and plan for its production. This will include reviewing the other groups' reports as they progress. Your biggest challenge is not in the actual presentation but in the planning. You will want to create "drama" by offsetting diverse views and determining in what order the group presentations are made and providing the opportunity for rebuttal. Someone in your group will be responsible for "filming" by making sure a video camera is charged

and ready.

c. **Tibetan Government in Exile**

Your group's perspective is that of the exiled supporters of the Dalai Lama. You currently maintain offices in Dharsalama, India and in major western cities like New York and London. You have as a goal the return to Tibet and the reestablishment of the Dalai Lama.

d. **Chinese Government**

As representatives of the Peoples' Republic of China, you view Tibet as an integral part of China. You oppose the efforts of the Tibetan exile groups and their supporters who seek to interfere in your countries' affairs. You control the press in China and make sure that web sites within China support your government's positions on Tibet.

e. **International "Free Tibet" Groups**

For a variety of reasons, your group has taken it as your goal the return to "power" of the Dalai Lama and "justice" for the Tibetan people. You support your efforts through volunteers, fundraising and the frequent support of celebrities. You have formed affiliated student groups at many United States universities.

f. **Human Rights Groups and Organizations**

Your groups sees the efforts of the Chinese government to control and police the people of Tibet as being in frequent violation of basic human rights. You monitor and publicize cases of injustice and try to bring international public opinion to bear on the situation.

g. **United States Government**

While concerned about the plight of the Tibetans, you

want to maintain a working relationship with the most populous of all countries. The President and the Secretary of State work through diplomacy with the Chinese government and the leaders of the Tibetan exiles.

h. **Chinese/Tibetan Historical Specialists (optional)**

Your job is to provide background information on issues prior to the Chinese movement into Tibet in the 1950's. Specifically, become familiar with The Opium Wars, The Boxer Rebellion, the Chinese Civil War after World War II. You should also know about the early history of the relationship between China and Tibet.

i. **Environmental Specialists (optional)**

The Chinese efforts to modernize the Tibetan Plateau have caused changes in the environment. Your group monitors these changes for possible negative effects. You frequently side with the Tibetan exiles against the Chinese.

Step 2) Do background research on the issues: (Your teacher may choose to provide readings or a presentation on these topics or they may be researched on the Internet.)

a) 19th Century Western Imperialism in China

b) The Boxer Rebellion

c) The Chinese Civil War and the Chinese "occupation" or "reassertion of control" over Tibet in 1951

d) The Great Cultural Revolution

e) Tiananmen Square

Step 3) Do research on the position of your group with respect to the following issues:

Tibet History Response Form

a) Is Tibet really an independent country or is it part of China?

b) Are Tibetan human rights being violated or are they being held to the same standard as ethnic Chinese?

c) Are Westerners interfering in Chinese affairs unfairly?

d) Are Westerners continuing their historical interference in Chinese matters?

e) Does the international community have the right to challenge the Chinese on their activities in Tibet?

f) What should be the solution for Tibet?

Step 4) Prepare Presentations

Presentation

Written Report

In your report, you and your team will answer two basic questions:

1. Are Tibet and its people oppressed by the Chinese government?

and

2. Why should or shouldn't people outside of China be concerned about Tibet?

You will use the perspective of your group keeping in mind the positions held by people who differ with your views. For example, the Chinese Government has an opposite view from most views held by the Tibetan

exile community.

You should use specific arguments and examples to make your case with respect to both questions. Start by completing this chart using your research. Each reason should be backed with a specific example or point that can be cited. The "yes" and "no" columns represent your view and those views or people opposed to your group. Fill in both sides, even if you disagree, so that you can develop an argument against that position.

Tibet Issues Response Form

Is Tibet Oppressed?	**Yes Reasons**	**No Reasons**
Reason 1		
Reason 2		
Reason 3		
Outside Concern?	**Yes Reasons**	**No Reasons**
Reason 1		
Reason 2		
Reason 3		

After completing the chart (or filling in as many points and reasons as you can), you are ready to begin your report.

You have several alternatives for this report. It may be in the form of a print publication, a website or a "PowerPoint" type format. You should use the logos of the group that you represent and attempt to make your presentation consistent with the approach used by your "group".

The project should consist of no more than 15 PowerPoint slides, a two page "flyer" or a 10-12 page website.

The presentation may be used during the Verbal Presentation during the filming of the News Special.

Verbal Presentation:

Your group will give your verbal presentation in two parts. First, you will summarize your group's position on the issues of Tibetan oppression and whether international concern is justified. You take no more than four minutes to do this. Secondly, plan on responses to groups opposed to your views as you will have an opportunity to rebut your opponents.

The verbal presentation will be videotaped by the newscast group. They will decide the overall format of the presentations and may surprise you in the questions they ask. Be prepared.

Not all members of your group need to present. But make sure that are presenter knows who to call on your team if they are stumped by a question. Good Luck.

Reflection:

Can a similar analysis be performed to compare other seemingly insolvable Chinese problems such as Taiwan or Chinese nuclear weapons programs? By trying to look at issues from the perspective of another country, as well as our own, how is it more possible to resolve disputes?

Evaluation

The evaluation of The Tibet Question can be evaluated holistically using a rubric or using a more traditional points-earned approach. The project consists of four parts:

The historical research component equals 20% of the project. The Tibet History Response Form represents student effort on this part of the project. Maximum points will only be achieved if the group demonstrates

an awareness of at least two points of view on a given topic.

The issues research component equals 30% of the project. Tibet Issues Response Form represents student effort on this part of the project. Maximum points will only be achieved if the group demonstrates an awareness of at least two points of view on a given topic.

The Written Report part of the presentation represents 30% of the student effort. Effectiveness of organization, clarity and visual impact will be necessary to achieve maximum points.

The Verbal Report part of the project represents 20% of the student effort. Effectiveness of oral presentation and use of multimedia supplements will be necessary to achieve maximum points.

In any component of this project maximum points will only be given if a group demonstrates their ability to distinguish:

1. the strength of an argument as measured by good use of valid evidence

2. the use of valid, counter-arguments against positions different than their own

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Teacher Notes

Grade 10, Unit 10.9

History Social Science Content Standards

10.9 Students analyze the international developments in the post- World War II world in terms of the Chinese Civil War, the rise of Mao Tse-tung, and the subsequent political and economic upheavals in China.

Language Arts Standards

Writing Applications

2.4 Students write Persuasive compositions that:

a. Structure ideas and arguments in a sustained and logical fashion.
b. Use specific rhetorical devices to support assertions (e.g. appeal to logic though reasoning; appeal to emotion or ethical belief; relate a personal anecdote, case study, or analogy)
c. Clarify and defend positions with precise and relevant evidence, including facts, expert opinions, quotations and expressions of commonly accepted beliefs and logical reasoning.
d. Address readers' concerns, counterclaims, biases, and expectations.

2.6 Students deliver descriptive presentations that:

a. Establish clearly the speaker's point of view on the subject of the presentation.
b. Establish clearly the speaker's relationship with that subject (e.g., dispassionate observation, personal involvement).

Credits:

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